

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00

ICAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 MCT-02 (ISO) W

-----002360 081916Z /47

O R 081600Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2021

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4565

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, WA, SF

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: COMMENT ON SECURITY SITUATION

1. THE SOUTH WEST AFRICA COMMAND ACCORDING TO NEWS REPORTS FROM WINDHOEK ANNOUNCE THAT AN OVAMBO HEADMAN HAD BEEN SHOT DEAD BY TERRORISTS OVER THE WEEKEND. THE HEADMAN HAD REPORTEDLY LIVED NEAR ONDANGWA SCENE OF A TERRORIST SABATOGUE OVER THE WEEKEND OF A WATER TOWER.

2. AN ARTICLE IN THE "CITIZEN", AUGUST 8, BY JAAP THERON REPORTED THAT "IN PRETORIA THESE (TERRORISTS) INCIDENTS ARE CONSIDERED AS DELAYING TACTICS BY SWAPO, APPARENTLY AIMED AT ENTICING THE SOUTH AFRICAN ARMY INTO A SECOND CASSINGA RAID AND THEREBY SHIPWRECKING THE PRESENT PEACE
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ATTEMPT." THERON WHO IS WELL CONNECTED IN SAG CIRCLES, SAID THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN ARMY "WILL TAKE CARE NOT TO BE DRAWN INTO AN OPERATION WHICH WILL LEAD TO UNNECESSARY DELAY OF THE SETTLEMENT. BUT IF IT HAD NO OTHER CHOICE TO MAINTAIN SECURITY BUT TO GIVE THE TERRORISTS ANOTHER LASHING IT WOULD APPARENTLY NOT HESITATE TO DO SO." MEANWHILE, MINISTER OF DEFENSE, P.W. BOTHA, YESTERDAY,

AUGUST 7, REPORTEDLY VISITED THE OPERATIONAL AREA ON AN INSPECTION TOUR.

3. COMMENT: WE SUSPECT THAT THE RECENT FLURRY OF TERRORIST INCIDENTS IS MORE THAN SIMPLY THE RESULT OF THE MOMENTUM OF SWAPO MILITARY PLANNING. AT THE MINIMUM, SWAPO VERY LIKELY HOPES TO RECOUP SOME OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PRESUMABLY POLITICAL LOSSES THAT IT'S SUFFERED AS A RESULT OF THE CASSINGA RAID AND THE SUBSEQUENT APPARENT LULL IN TERRORIST ACTIVITY FOR MORE THAN TWO MONTHS. WHETHER SWAPO MILITARY LEADERS ALSO HOPE TO PROVOKE SOUTH AFRICA INTO ACTION WHICH WOULD "SHIPWRECK" THE PROCESS TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL IS OF COURSE, UNKNOWN BUT IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THIS IS THE CASE. THE DEFENSE MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE OPERATIONAL AREA AND THERON'S REPORT SEEM INTENDED TO CONVEY THE MESSAGE THAT THE SAG IS TREATING THE SITUATION SERIOUSLY.
EDMONDSON

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